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SUBJECT: REPORT ON AFRP "RADIO BROADCASTING IN THE U.S."

**¶1.** Summary. Two Ghanaian radio broadcasters were among the participants in an AFRP on "Radio Broadcasting in the U.S." from January 31-February 18, 2005. Both had rave reviews for the program and said the experience broadened everyone's perspective. One of the journalists was particularly impressed by a visit to the Navajo nation but surprised by the poverty in such a rich country as the United States. End Summary.

**¶2.** Ransford Anertey Abbey, Director of Operations for Choice FM, said he learned more about other African countries from listening to his colleagues in the AFRP, such as in the case of Sudan. The Sudanese representative complained that journalists in the Christian south of the country are discriminated against and some are unable to practice their profession because the Muslim-led government in the north demands that all journalists are fluent in Arabic as well as English.

**¶3.** In Washington, D.C., the group attended a briefing at the State Department, visited Voice of America and talked to some of the African broadcasters there, and met with representatives of federal government and non-governmental organizations.

Mr. Abbey said the Washington part of the trip was especially useful because it gave the group an overview of how U.S. federal, state and local laws are drafted and implemented.

**¶4.** He said he was surprised by his visit to the Navajo nation, a territory ruled by tribal laws and where the houses had no doors, no electricity and no running water, characteristics that reminded him very much of a typical African village. He said he never expected to find such poverty in the United States. Unlike Africa, however, he said that once he entered the mud building housing the Navajo ruling council, he said he was stunned to see everyone was working on a laptop computer. He made friends with the President of the Navajo Nation, who told him he might visit Ghana in the near future.

**¶5.** Mr. Abbey was the only journalist in the group to be interviewed by NPR's "All Things Considered," which was initially scheduled to be a seven-minute interview on press freedom, but which turned into a 40-minute discussion of various topics. In the interview, Mr. Abbey said he supports the idea of public radio in Ghana because people need to be well-informed but that in remote areas of the country residents have no choice but to listen to state-run radio. He praised public radio for being independent and responsible to its listeners, and not to a station owner or government entity. He said the Minnesota public radio staff later told him they plan to use his clips in their fund-raising campaigns.

**¶6.** He would like to see the IVLP program extended to six weeks but added that even in the three-week program there were some appointments that could have been eliminated. He said one tour instead of several visits to NPR stations would have been enough. He also criticized several professors in Miami for not being very knowledgeable about Africa, and said the discussion with them could have been dropped.

**¶7.** The other Ghanaian participating in the AFRP was Seidu Ibrahim Bomanjo, a Producer for Upper East Radio for the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation in Wa. This was Mr. Bomanjo's first time in the United

States, and he said he was overwhelmed by the level of development in the country. He was also surprised by the public's participation in community radio, that he witnessed during the visit to the NPR affiliate in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He also mentioned how astounded he was by the sophisticated technology being used by U.S. journalists and broadcasting outlets.

YATES